

even the routine business of Parliament can be got through, let alone any Government measures embodying Party policy,"

he proceeds to sketch in the personality aspect —

"The Labour Party itself grew more and more restive at its own parliamentary impotence, section after section breaking out in angry rebellion, with practically everybody discontented at the meagre achievements of an overworked Cabinet whose difficulties were very inadequately realised. The Prime Minister was not in the mood to find time or energy for that friendly social intercourse with the members of his own Party, or even with his Ministerial colleagues, which goes so far to avert friction and produce the 'team spirit'. More and more he tended to spend his scanty leisure in less disagreeable society. Thus the session of 1931 opened with the Parliamentary Labour Party seriously discontented with itself, the several Ministers out of touch with one another, struggling separately with their departmental difficulties, the Cabinet unable to find solutions for problems in the circumstances actually insoluble, and the back benchers at loggerheads with themselves and with the front bench. The Prime Minister—very much aware of the shortcomings of each one of his colleagues, and of the Party to which he belonged, as well as (may it be said?) perhaps incessantly rather too conscious of his own superiority—was not in a condition to withstand the temptation of flattering suggestions that began to be made from more than one quarter. Why not cut the Gordian Knot by getting rid of the perpetual nuisance of Parliamentary Opposition, especially if such a surgical operation involved also the elimination, or at least, the reduction to impotence, of those troublesome sections of the Labour Party whom the Prime Minister had come to loathe with a bitterness that could not be concealed!"¹

From the Coribervatne point of view, a National Govern-

ment—first suggested, overthrew Mr. Lloyd George
—was
attractive, as a means of getting a Tariff, to
the Prime
Minister, it began to appeal as a means at
once of dis-
entangling himself from the disappointments
surrounding
the second Labour Government, and of
effecting reductions
in expenditure on account of Unemployment

¹ *Political Quarterly*, January 1932 Also *Current History*
(New York)